

**B-WET Hawai'i Grant Writing and Application Workshop
USDA Spring 2006 Training**

Areas of Concern (based on reviewers' comments re: application packages):

- ✓ Encourage applicants to start planning and developing proposals early to avoid the rush. This also ensures application package has clarity, is comprehensive and complete (45% of applications were submitted incomplete with missing data and project descriptions were not clear, in some instances ambiguous that read as first drafts)
- ✓ Get familiar with NOAA's objectives (<http://www.noaa.gov/>) and description of Science, Service, Stewardship
- ✓ Adherence to content and performance standards (CPS) appropriate for public schools, private schools and/or independent charter schools (i.e. public schools' 2006 CPS III).
- ✓ Thoroughly read through grant proposal criteria
 - 10% of applications did not meet minimum selection criteria requirements
 - Same 10% funding request went over budget maximum allowable
 - Proposed activity or project must support the watershed and should make a connection to the watershed
- ✓ Adhere to outline template provided in Section IV of Full Funding Announcement
 - 10% of applications developed their own outline making it difficult to read
 - Reviewers re-read applications several times to ensure criteria met—this created delays in review process
- ✓ Competitive grants process expectations
 - Spell check and grammar check
 - Letters of support from partners and external contributors are signed
 - Plan of action for integration into school curriculum
 - Plan of action for sustainability beyond B-WET Funding
 - Plan of Action for outreach strategy
 - Detailed explanation of budget justification and narrative proposal (clear and concise)
 - Indoor and outdoor activities are integrated
 - Teacher training and student activity proposals must be stand-alone projects (if an organization submits separate proposals one for teacher training and one for student programs, treat each proposal as an independent, stand-alone project).

Additional Writing Suggestions and Common Mistakes

When preparing a proposal for B-WET Hawai'i, the following may be helpful:

- Get familiar with NOAA's objectives (<http://www.noaa.gov>) and description of responsibilities under the Science, Service and Stewardship section.
- Thoroughly read through and use the outline detailed in the Full Funding Announcement as a model format in drafting proposals. Project narrative must not exceed 25 pages.
- Grant proposals requesting large amounts of funds are expected to serve proportionately larger student/teacher populations and/or show strong partnerships with many organizations.
- If an applicant is submitting more than one proposal, each proposal must be treated as an independent, stand-alone project. Each application must comply separately with the grant application criteria.
- This grant opportunity should not be considered a long-term source of funds. It is crucial that proposals demonstrate and/or have an action plan to ensure projects are sustainable, once initiated.
- Proposals should also explain and/or have an action plan for integration to school curriculum that support science, technology, geography, social studies, math, language arts, art, music, etc., in the larger context of environmental education and stewardship. Proposal must clearly state alignment with state and/or national standards that specifically support public, private, and/or charter school system goals.
- Funding for salaries and fringe benefits may be included in the budget, but justification must be included in the budget narrative. Majority of funding must be used primarily for programmatic support that engages students in meaningful outdoor experiences and activities and/or professional development programs for teachers, in the context of environmental education and stewardship.
- While curriculum development may be an end product and a result of learner outcome, the priority of the proposal must demonstrate meaningful outdoor experiences.
- Sharing information plays a major role in this grant opportunity. Specify outreach strategy to peers and community at large (school or community presentation, neighboring schools, community events, local conferences, etc.)
- Register in advance with the Federal Government's online grants search and application tool at www.grants.gov to be eligible to submit proposals online. Takes 3 – 4 weeks for complete registration prior to actual proposal submission.

Property of B-WET Hawai'i (NOAA Pacific Services Center)

<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/psc/bwet.html>

Examples of requests that fall outside of B-WET Hawai'i criteria:

- Projects that do not include a meaningful outdoor experience
- Projects that do not relate to environmental science or stewardship
- Grants are not awarded in support of: endowments; individuals; building campaigns or capital construction; deficit financing; annual giving.
- Grants may not be used for fund-raising purposes.
- Grants may not be used to primarily develop curriculum.
- Grants are not awarded to primarily support: operating costs, salaries, benefits, travel or indirect costs. Staff costs for specific project-related tasks will be considered.
- Grants are awarded on a yearly basis—proposal should only include request assistance for 1 year.

Common Mistakes

- All required forms are not included with application package
- Incomplete or missing information on any of the government standard forms (SF 424, SF 424A, SF424B, CD-511, SF-LLL, CD-346)
- If charging Indirect Costs, the negotiated rate agreement is not included in application package
- Include accomplishments to date (experience)
- Details of benefits or results expected and explanation of project evaluation
- Letters of support are unsigned and/or letters from partners mentioned in proposal are not included
- Explain what data collection will be used for
- Applicants assume prior knowledge on the part of the reviewers of their organization and their programs
- If applying for a grant with the possibility of continuation beyond the first year, the budget and project period should reflect only one year. The project period should only be for one year and the amount of Federal and non-Federal funds should include only one year of funding on all government standard forms and narratives
- Include specific start and end dates—include month, date and year

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